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Vol. III., No. XII.

CHARLESTOWN, JEFFERSON COUNTY, W. VA., FRIDAY, MAY 27, 1887.

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HOW MEN DIE IN BATTLE.

War as Seen By a Private of an Observant Turn—Death and Wounds in the Ranks.

In Frank Wilkeson's "Recollections of a Private" is this chapter, which cannot fail to be of greater interest to the average reader than the war stories which are written from the standpoint of men who were not in the fight, or, being there, treat of the struggle in a general and tactical way.

Almost every death on the battlefield is different. And the manner of the death depends on the wound and on the man, whether he is cowardly or brave, whether his vitality is large or small, whether he is a man of active imagination or is dull of intellect, whether he is of nervous or sympathetic temperament. I instance deaths and wounds that I saw in Grant's last campaign.

On the second day of the battle of the Wilderness, when I fought as an infantry soldier, I saw more men killed and wounded than I did before or after the same time. I knew but few of the men in the regiment in whose ranks I stood, but I learned the Christian names of some of them. The man who stood next to me on my right was called Will. He was cool, brave and intelligent. In the morning when the second corps was advancing and driving Hill's soldiers slowly back, I was flurried. He noticed it, and steadied my nerves by saying kindly: "Don't fire so fast. This fight will last all day. Don't hurry. Cover your man before you pull your trigger. Take it easy, my boys, take it easy, and your cartridges will last the longer." This man fought effectively. During the day I had learned to look up to this excellent soldier and lean on him. Toward evening, as we were being slowly driven back to the Brock road by Longstreet's men, we made a stand. I was behind a tree firing, with my rifle barrel resting on the sub of a limb. Will was standing by my side, but in the open. He, with a groan, doubled up, and dropped on the ground at my feet. He looked up at me. His face was pale. He gasped for breath a few times, and then said faintly: "That ends me. I am shot through the bowels." I said: "Crawl to the rear. We are not far from the intrenchments along the Brock road." I saw him sit up, and indistinctly saw him reach for his rifle, which had fallen from his hands as he fell. Again I spoke to him to go to the rear. He looked at me and said impatiently: "I tell you that I am as good as dead. There is no use in fooling with me. I shall stay here." Then he pitched forward, dead, shot again and through the head. We fell back before Longstreet's soldiers and left Will lying in a window of dead men.

When we got in the Brock road intrenchments a man a few files to my left dropped dead, shot just above the right eye. He did not groan or sigh or make the slightest physical movement, except that his chest heaved a few times. The life went out of his face instantly, leaving it without a particle of expression. It was plastic, and, as the facial muscles contracted, it took many shapes. When this man's body became cold and his face hardened it was horribly distorted, as though he had suffered intensely. Any person who had not seen him killed would have said that he endured supreme agony before death released him. A few minutes after he fell, another man, a little farther to the left, fell with apparently a precisely similar wound. He was straightened out and lived for over an hour. He did not speak. Simply lay on his back, and his broad chest rose and fell, slowly at first, and then faster and faster, and more and more feebly, until he was dead. And his face hardened, and it was almost terrifying in its painful distortion. I have seen dead soldiers' faces which were wreathed in smiles, and heard their comrades say that they had died happy. I do not believe that the face of a dead soldier, lying on a battlefield, ever truthfully indicates the mental or physical anguish, or peacefulness of mind which he suffered or enjoyed before his death. The face is plastic after death, and, as the facial muscles cool and contract, they draw the face into many shapes. Sometimes the dead smile, again they stare with glassy eyes and rolling tongues and dreadfully distorted visages at you. It goes for nothing. One death was as painless as the other.

After Longstreet's soldiers had driven the second corps into their intrenchments along the Brock road, a battle-exhausted infantryman stood behind a large oak tree. His back rested against it. He was very tired, and held his rifle loosely in his hand. The Confederates were directly in our front. This soldier was apparently in perfect safety. A solid shot from a Confederate gun struck the oak tree squarely about four feet from the ground, but did not have sufficient force to tear through the tough wood. The soldier fell dead. There was not a scratch on him. He was killed by concussion.

While we were fighting savagely over these intrenchments the woods in our front caught fire, and I saw many of our wounded burn to death. Must they not have suffered horribly! I am not at all sure of that. The smoke rolled heavily and slowly before the fire. It enveloped the wounded, and I think that by far the larger portion of the men who were roasted were suffocated before the flames curled round them. The spectacle was courage-sapping and pitiful, and it appealed strongly to the imagination of the spectators, but I do not believe that the wounded soldiers, who were being burned, suffered greatly, if they suffered at all.

Wounded soldiers, it mattered not how slight the wounds, generally hastened away from the battle line. A wound entailed a man to go to the rear and to a hospital. Of course there were many exceptions to this rule, as there would necessarily be in battles where from twenty to thirty thousand men were wounded. I frequently saw slightly wounded men who were marching with their colors. I personally saw but two men wounded who continued to fight. During the first day's fighting in the Wilderness I saw a youth of about twenty years skip and yell, stung by a bullet through the thigh. He turned to limp to the rear. After he had gone a few steps he stopped, then he kicked off his leg once or twice to see if it would work. Then he tore the clothing away from his leg so as to see the wound. He looked at it attentively for an instant, then kicked off his leg again, then turned and took his place in the ranks and resumed firing. There was considerable disorder in the line, and the soldiers moved to and fro—now a few feet to the left, now a few feet to the right. One of these movements brought me directly behind this wounded soldier. I could see plainly from that position, and I pushed into the gaping line and began firing. In a minute or two the wounded soldier dropped his rifle, and clapping his left arm, exclaimed: "Am hit again!" He sat down behind the battle ranks and tore off the sleeve of his shirt. The wound was very slight—not much more than skin deep. He tied his handkerchief around it, picked up his rifle and took his position alongside of me. I said: "You are fighting in bad luck to-day. You had better get away from here." He turned his head to answer me. His head jerked, he staggered, then fell, then regained his feet. A tiny fountain of blood and teeth and bone and bits of tongue burst from his mouth. He had been shot through the jaws; the lower one was broken and hung down. I looked directly into his open mouth, which was ragged and bloody and tongueless. He cast his rifle furiously on the ground, and staggered off.

The next day, just before Longstreet's soldiers made their first charge on the Second Corps, I heard the peculiar cry of a stricken man utter as the bullet tears through his flesh. I turned my head, as I loaded my rifle, to see who was hit. I saw a bearded Irishman pull up his shirt. He had been wounded on the left side just below the floating ribs. His face was gray with fear. The wound looked as though it were mortal. He looked at it for an instant, and then poked it gently with his index finger. He flushed redly and smiled with satisfaction. He tucked his shirt into his trousers and was fighting in the ranks again before I had capped my rifle. The ball had cut a groove in his skin only. The play of the Irishman's face was so expressive, his emotions changed so quickly, that I could not keep from laughing.

Near Spottsylvania I saw, as my battery was moving into action, a group of wounded men lying in the shade cast by some large oak trees. All of these men's faces were gray. They silently looked at us as we marched past them. One wounded man, a blonde giant of about forty years, was smoking a briar-wood pipe. He had a firm grip on the pipe stem. I asked him what he was doing. "Having my last smoke, young fellow," he replied. His dauntless blue eyes met mine, and he bravely tried to smile. I saw that he was dying fast.

Wounded soldiers almost always tore their clothing away from their wounds, so as to see them and judge of their character. Many of them would smile, and their faces would brighten as they realized that they were not hard hit, and that they could go home for a few months. Others would give a quick glance at their wounds, and then shrink back as from a blow, and turn pale, as they realized the truth that they were mortally wounded. The enlisted men were exceedingly accurate judges of the probable result which would ensue from any wound they saw. They had seen hundreds of soldiers wounded, and they had noticed that certain wounds always resulted fatally. They knew when they were fatally wounded, and after the shock of discovery had passed, they generally braced themselves and died in a manly manner. It was seldom that an American or Irish volunteer flunked in the presence of death.

MERRIMAC VS. MONITOR.

A Midshipman's Account of the Battle With the "Cheesecake."

Washington Cor. Cleveland Leader.

"It is not generally known," said Lieut. Littlepage, formerly of the Confederate navy, to me in speaking of the famous fight between the Monitor and the Merrimac, "that extensive preparations were made in the repair to the Merrimac after the fight so as to have the next contest between the two iron clads one of short duration. I was a midshipman on the Merrimac when she fought the Monitor, and I can say that we were taken wholly by surprise when the strange vessel put in an appearance in Hampton roads. We had sunk the Cumberland, caused the Congress to burn, and the Minnesota and one or two others to run aground, and on that morning when we went out, we thought to finish the Minnesota, which had been unable to get itself off the bar, our first intimation of the presence of the Monitor was when we saw her run out from behind the Minnesota to attack us before we could begin the onset upon the Minnesota. We thought at first it was a raft on which one of the Minnesota's boilers was being taken to the shore for repairs, and when suddenly a shot was fired from her turret we imagined an accidental explosion of some kind had taken place on the raft.

"In the engagement that followed we were unable to do anything with her though our guns were served continuously and broadside after broadside was discharged. We tried to ram her, but found that our prow had been too badly damaged by running into the Cumberland on the day before to inflict any harm upon the Monitor. She pounded us considerably, but not a shot penetrated our armor, though it was loosened and repairs made imperative at the earliest moment. Our vessel was leaking badly, but by active efforts we were enabled to keep her from taking too much water. We had twenty-one of our crew wounded, we thought that we had incurred losses in that respect in a remarkable degree. Had a shot from the Monitor entered one of our port holes it would have probably killed fifty men, for there was a crew of 350 men aboard, so that there would be no lack of help when an emergency should arise, and we were quite closely packed together.

THE CONFEDERATES' PLAN.

"About 3 o'clock in the afternoon the Monitor withdrew from the fight and went over the bar into shallow water, where we, drawing much more water than she, could not follow. We understood that she had run out of ammunition. As we were leaking badly and there was no prospect that we would be able to reach the Minnesota in the shallow water where she lay, our captain gave the order to return to Norfolk, where we immediately went into dry dock for repairs. It was fully a month before we were ready to go out again, and meanwhile all sorts of reports were circulated among the Federals about us. It was claimed that we were afraid to show ourselves to fight, all of which we only laughed at, feeling that we would soon be able to give a good account of ourselves. I think that if the two vessels had again met we should have made short work of the Monitor. Every bit of our armor had been replaced by plates two inches thick, and we had also a large number of shot for the 7-inch guns in the form of bolts about 2½ feet in length, pointed with steel, with which we intended to make certainly an impression upon the Monitor. Beside all these things we had organized a boarding party, which was divided into several sections.

"It was the plan for the proposed engagement that the Merrimac should at once run alongside of the Monitor. We could easily do this, for our engines were more powerful than hers and we could make greater speed. Then one section of the boarding party would immediately put down gang planks by which the men would speedily get on board the Monitor, one section of them taking sledge and iron wedges to drive between the turret of the ship and her deck, so as to prevent it from revolving and pointing her guns at us; another party was to run around the turret with a hawser made fast to our bow and which was to be coiled upon deck ready for the emergency, and after the circuit had been made, of the turret the plan was to fasten the other end of the hawser to the Merrimac and thus bind the two vessels together. While this was going on another party was to rush to the turret and everywhere else that an opportunity was offered and pour oil down into the hold of the Monitor and then set fire to it. Another party was to be ready with large tarballs to extinguish the flames should the crew of the Monitor surrender and it be desired to save the vessel.

"But we were disappointed in all this, for when at last we were ready

and steamed out of Norfolk we found that the Monitor was with a number of other Federal vessels under the shelter of the land fortifications. We felt ourselves a match for any or all of the vessels, but in no condition to stand the combined force of the fleet and the fortifications, so we withdrew. Then when Norfolk surrendered and there seemed no longer a chance for the Merrimac to be of service she was blown up and destroyed. Those are a few of the facts connected with that fight that have never been published."

MARK TWAIN ON SCHOOLS.

A Witty Speech at a Dinner in New York on Thursday.

Mark Twain at the New York Stationers' Barquet.

You have all seen a little book called "English as She is Spoken." Now, in my capacity of publisher I recently received a manuscript from a teacher which embodied a number of answers given by her pupils to questions propounded. These answers show that the children had nothing but the sound to go by; the sense was perfectly empty. Here are some of their answers to words they were asked to define: Auriferous—pertaining to an orifice [laughter]; ammonia—the food of the gods [renewed laughter]; equestrian—one who asks questions [roars of laughter]; parasite—a kind of umbrella [shouts of laughter]; ipecac—a man who likes a good a dinner [renewed laughter]. And here is this definition of an ancient word honored by a great party: Republic—a sinner mentioned in the Bible. [Shouts of laughter and applause]. And here is an innocent derivation of a zoological kind: "There are a good many donkeys in the theological gardens." [Great laughter]. Here is also a definition which really isn't very bad in its way: Demagogue—a vessel containing beer and other liquids. Prolonged laughter.

THE FOUNDATIONS OF GALVESTON.

New Orleans Picayune.

An artesian well is being bored at Galveston, Texas. The city stands on a narrow strip of land, which fences off Galveston bay from the Gulf of Mexico, and is surrounded by water, being at different places from two miles to forty miles from the mainland. It is, therefore, a peculiar place for an artesian well. So far a depth of six hundred and fifty-eight feet has been reached. The following are the material and stratification passed through: Quicksand, 32 feet; blue clay, 17; coarse sand, 26; white clay, 107; sea mud, 57; olive clay, 116; sea mud, 130; blue 26; sea mud, 11; blue clay, 147—total, 658 feet. At a depth of 500 feet several palmetto logs were passed through. At present a nine-inch tube is being sunk. Galveston is truly a city built upon sand, but although several times assailed by the fury of storms it still stands. It would be interesting to have the boring prosecuted to bedrock, so as to determine the depth to the solid floor of the Mexican gulf at its western extremity. Of course a large portion of Texas is built up of the washings of the highlands into the sea, whose rock bottom for a long distance from the shore is more or less covered with the debris of the continent.

MIGHT DO WORSE.

Washington Critic.

"No, sir," thundered the old gentleman, "I have made up my mind that my daughter shall never marry a man who plays poker." "She might do a great deal worse, sir," "Impossible! Poker has proved the ruin of thousands of men, and its victims never recover from the infatuation. She could never do worse." "Excuse me, sir, but I am sure she could. She might marry some fellow that thinks he plays poker." The old man thought it over.

AN ILLINOIS SNAKE FARM.

Near Galton, Illinois, is a snake farm, managed by Captain Dan Stover and his wife. These good people breed and raise rattlesnakes and other reptiles for sale in the Eastern markets. A firm in Philadelphia takes all the rattlesnakes to make into an oil which they advertise cures rheumatism. Last month Captain Stover contracted with a firm for 250 rattlesnakes at \$2.25 each, none to measure less than four feet in length or to be less than six years of age. The older the snake the better and stronger, it is claimed, is the oil. The farm is provided with mounds where the snakes burrow, and upon which they come out to bask in the sunlight. There are thirty-seven of these mounds on Stover's farm. The farm is a tract virgin prairie and has never seen a plow, and in summer its native grass is very high, rendering it an excellent place for the reptiles to hide in.

Italian astronomers place the age of the world at 80,000,000 years, and are agreed that it has been peopled for about 50,000,000.

GIRLS, GIRLS, GO WEST!

Red Bend, Washington Territory.

When the census of this town was taken last month it was found that there was a population of 378, including 293 males, 60 married women, one widow engaged, two maids engaged, and the rest children. More than 200 of the men are bachelors ranging in age from 25 to 50. Red Bend is some distance from a railroad, and it has been a very difficult matter to get young women to locate here. Most of the girls who come into this region stop at Yakima, or go thence to the larger towns south of here.

When the school house was built the directors advertised in various Territorial papers for a teacher, and the first one who presented herself was employed. She had not been at the desk a fortnight before she was married to a storekeeper named Elverson, who was about the best looking young man in the town. She resigned her place, but consented to serve until her successor had arrived. One of the young women with whom the committee has been in correspondence was found disengaged, and in the course of a month she transferred herself to Red Bend and took charge of the school. She was a tolerably homely woman somewhat advanced in years, but she, too, was led to the altar in less than a month, and gave up the school as her predecessor had done.

Once again her place was filled, and things went on smoothly for a while. About that time McGinn, the tavern keeper, imported a servant girl from Portland, and put her to work in his kitchen at a salary of \$9 a week. Mrs. McGinn was not very lusty, and her husband found that the only way in which keeping hotel was possible was for him to have efficient female help. He had had serious trouble in getting anybody to come, but the wages that he offered finally induced the girl spoken of to accept the job. She had no more than learned the ways of the kitchen before two or three young men began to hang around the back door of the tavern. McGinn was equal to the emergency. He watched matters for a day or two, and, becoming convinced that the school house episodes were to have a repetition in his own kitchen, he got a gun, and just as a young man appeared at the back door the next evening after supper he jumped out on him.

"What do you want here?" he asked.

"Nothing," said the fellow coloring up a little; "nothing much, I was just calling on the girl in there. She's an old friend of my family, and I look in once in a while to see how she's getting on."

"Well, I'm a friend of your family, too," said McGinn, "to the extent that I don't want to kill you, but if you don't keep away from here I'll murder you. Now, you git."

The youth slunk away. The next day the girl was missing from the kitchen, and late in the afternoon it was discovered that she had married the young man. The same day the school mistress announced her resignation, and as McGinn was on the warpath with his gun, the leading citizens made up their minds that a crisis had arrived which would require a good deal of statesmanship to bridge over.

That evening, when the school committee met to consider things, Mr. Elder, the chairman said he had an idea which he thought might be worthy the attention of his associates. He proposed that in the future all school teachers should be made to sign a bond not to marry before the end of the term. The idea was accepted, but fearing that the conditions might make it impossible for them to get women into the town, they said nothing about them to the one with whom they opened negotiations. She came on and after deciding to take the place was informed of the contract which she would have to sign. To this she indignantly declined to accede. The school committee was in exorable, and so was she. She said she would leave for home in the morning. The committeemen looked at one another to see if anybody was weakening, but no one appeared to be willing to give in; so it was decided that she would have to go. This particular girl was young and very vivacious, and when she started off with school director Beebe for Yakima the whole town wished she would stay. An hour later Beebe drove into town with the girl still in his wagon, and to the people who gathered around the vehicle, with questions he said:

"The fact is we've decided to get married. She didn't want to go back, and I didn't want to have her go."

Everybody felt that Beebe had played a trick on everybody else, but there was nothing to say. At the next meeting of the committee which Beebe did not attend, Mr. Elder again had an idea which he wanted to submit. He said that in view of what had happened, it occurred to him that Red Bend, had

greatness within its grasp. "Now," he continued, "let us overstock this market with schoolma'ams and servant girls. Advertise for them everywhere, offer big wages and hire all that comes. We'll get enough after a while to go around, and when we do it we may have a few on hand."

The suggestion was discussed at considerable length, and finally adopted. The school board decided to hire ten teachers, and twenty of the married men in town agreed to take twenty-five servant girls. The advertisements brought many answers, and in the course of time the town began to fill up with young women of every description. As they arrived they were assigned to different families, and before a week had passed there were more marriages on foot than the preacher could keep trace of. The experiment had been found to work splendidly, and as the only schoolma'am in town now is said to be on the point of marrying, it is thought the same device will be resorted to again. Six girls have married out of McGinn's kitchen, and during the last twelve months there have been fourteen teachers at the little school. The present incumbent is a grenadier from Michigan and the committee think she will last some time.

BRIDAL DRESSES.

Demorest's Monthly for June.

Rich satin and faille Francaise of a delicate ivory tint are the preferred materials for fashionable bridal dresses, made with extreme simplicity, the train long and usually untrimmed, the corsage high, with the neck cut square or in V-shape, and elbow sleeves. Handsome lace point or Duchesse, and pearl-beaded tulle are used for ornamenting the front and sides of the skirt, to which the garniture is principally confined. The foot of the skirt in front is finished with a full ruching, sometimes of tulle, through which loops of satin or moire ribbon are interspersed, or of lace or the dress material, and sometimes the French fashion is followed of using a garland of orange blossoms set in lace.

A notable bridal dress is of rich ivory satin, made in the style of the sixteenth century, with a long, perfectly plain court train, the front ornamented with three flounces of point lace, each headed by embroidery of pearls and silver, and the foot finished with a garland of orange blossoms. The pointed bodice is embroidered with pearls and silver and finished with a high Meisei collar, similarly embroidered. Another is of ivory-white faille Francaise, with square, perfectly plain court train, the front draped with Duchesse lace, over a foot-ruching of tulle and satin loops, and the corsage cut square in the neck and trimmed with ruchings of tulle and ribbon and sprays of orange blossoms.

A bridal dress of white gros grain has a beaded tulle front, outlined by nodding plumes of white lilies, and revers embroidered with pearl beads finish the square neck and ornament the elbow sleeves. Another toilet is of satin and faille Francaise in combination, the latter material used for the petticoat, the front of which is embroidered with silver, crystal, and pearl beads, one side ornamented with a cascade of satin, from which depends sprays of lilies of the valley, and the other side almost covered with a Greek drapery retained by a Marguerite pocket, embroidered to match the tulle. The train is of satin, slightly pointed in shape, and falls over the petticoat. The corsage has the pointed front covered with embroidery like that on the bodice, and is completed by a unique monture of lilies of the valley and quillings of satin.

The public debt of Great Britain in 1885 was \$3,701,653,270. We have not at hand the figures for 1886. In the "Dictionary of English History" we are told that "in 1883 a great scheme in connection with the national debt was formed by Mr. Childers, by which, through the creation of new annuities, terminable in twenty years, £70,000,000 of debt could be immediately extinguished, and £173,000,000 in twenty years. The national debt in twenty years amounted to £756,376,510. In 1884 Mr. Childers carried an act by which a portion of the debt was to be converted from 3 per cent. to 2½ per cent. stock.

London is the largest city in the world in point of population. In 1881 it contained 3,814,571 inhabitants. Tokio, formerly called Yedo, had, in 1879, but 841,510 inhabitants, and is now said to have 957,121. The population of Yedo was formerly much greater than it now is, because of the Shogun compelling every clan prince to live in Yedo for a great portion of the year with a large body of retainers. This custom has been extinct since the revolution of 1868. The area covered by the capital is about twenty-eight square miles.

Lace bonnets, which were so stylish last season, are again seen among the stylish models.